

16
NEW TITLES
FROM MARVEL IN 1983
NUMBER 21

COMICS FEATURE

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**A PREVIEW OF
THE JLA INDEX**

**DON HECK
INTERVIEWED**



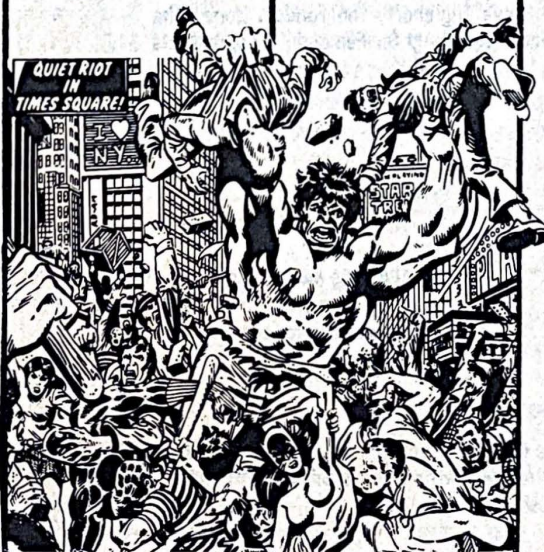
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COMICS FEATURE

November Number 21

\$2.50**"...AND JUSTICE
(LEAGUE) FOR ALL..."**A Close Look at the Members
of the JLA by Murray R. Ward
Page 45**MARVEL TEAMS OF
THE 1970's**The Defenders, The Inhumans,
The Champions, Plus A
Couple That You May Have
Forgotten About.
by Murray R. Ward Page 71**STAFF**HAL SCHUSTER
publisherMIKE HARRIS
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Thompson
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Murray R. Ward**An Interview With
DON HECK**One of Marvel's Three Main Artists
During the Silver Age, Don Heck is
Still Going Strong Today.
by Richard Howell Page 29**FEATURE
NEWS**Moench, Shooter
and Death in The
Marvel Universe.
NEW TITLES FROM
MARVEL. FEATURE
NEWS PREVIEWS
COMIC LISTINGS
and More News.
Page 5**FANDOM
ZONE**Cover by Matt
Feazell Page 51**Fandom Origins**
1970 by Don &
Maggie Thompson**Comic Gourmet**
Reviews on Eclipse
Magazine and the
Twinkie Ads.
Page 55**ZIPPY**Making Sense of the
Senselessness
by Bryan Uhlenbrock
Page 62**JULIUS
SCHWARTZ**And the Comics of
the Fantastic
Page 64**ANIMATED
ANTICS**Of Rats and Magic
Bambi and Secret
of Nimh Reviewed by
Jim Korkis Page 68**STRIP TEASE**If a Strip Sometimes
Looks Chopped Up,
It's Not Always the
Artist's Fault—
by Rick Norwood
Page 81**The Thinking
Man's Hero
THE WORKS
OF GARDNER
FOX**

by Gene Phillips

END NOTESOnce More, With
Freleng by Peter
Sanderson Page 94

Cover by Robert Lewis

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An interview with DON HECK



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By Richard
Howell

HOWELL: We'll start with a real easy one. How did you get into comics?

HECK: I started work at Harvey Publications—inside, doing paste-up, and white-out, and finishing off reprint work and stuff.

HOWELL: That was in the early 1950s?

HECK: That was 1949. About December 1949, I think is when I first started. I always wanted to be a cartoonist, only because one of my favorites was Milt Caniff. Obviously. [Laughter]

HOWELL: Yeah, I picked that up.

HECK: Anybody could tell.

HOWELL: What was Harvey publishing at the time? What sort of comics?

HECK: Well, they used to put out **TERRY AND THE PIRATES**—they used to put out a lot of reprints. **DICK TRACY**, **TERRY AND THE PIRATES**, that one that Alfred Andriola did, **KERRY DRAKE**...

HOWELL: Right.

HECK: They were also the ones that put out **BOY'S RANCH** by Jack Kirby [and Joe Simon].

HOWELL: I know it well.

HECK: Yeah, that was a beaut. I wish I would've grabbed a bunch. I was right there in the office [laughter].

HOWELL: Oh, boy.

HECK: But that's life, y'know. If you could only go back...

HOWELL: I guess. So they were involved in quite a lot of different types of comics?

HECK: Yeah, quite a bit. They had romance, they had **BLACK CAT**, done by Lee Elias. They also had, oh, **JOE PALOOKA**, **LITTLE MAX**...Now you're really joggin' em.

HOWELL: Did you start drawing for Harvey, too?

HECK: No, I didn't. In fact, one of the guys who was there was in circulation or something like that, and he was leaving. About that time another

friend of mine was leaving, too, and I thought well, I was going to get all the garbage stuff to do, so I decided I'd better go out and try to free-lance. I made some samples up, but they [Harvey] weren't interested in my work—which was normal, I was only a beginner. Then I decided I'd call up three different outfits in one day. I decided to go out and try to see if I could sell anything.

HOWELL: There were more publishers in those days, I take it?

HECK: There were about 20-25 in those days. I mean, you could just pick up your phone and take a shot. And so, the first day I walked out I got two jobs. I didn't even go to the third guy.

HOWELL: Why bother?

HECK: Anyway, talk about luck. One job was for Quality and the other, I think was for Hillman.

HOWELL: Do you remember what they were?

HECK: The names of the stories, or something?

HOWELL: Well, characters, or what types...

HECK: Well, no, it wasn't that. It was just, like, mystery stuff or weird stuff. No major comic or anything.

HOWELL: So you actually started drawing by doing the mystery stories?

HECK: Yeah. More or less, yeah—like the weird type stuff. Then, I guess I did a couple of those, and then this fellow I told you about who worked in circulation at Harvey called me up because he was going to start a publishing outfit. And so, I got by for the first two years free-lancing. I had somebody who wanted me to start working for him. I got very lucky. Then what did I do? I have an old book here, so I can look up what the hell I did [laughter]. I did work for **WAR FURY** and **WEIRD TERROR**, and what else? **HORRIFIC** and stuff like that. **DANGER COMICS**. It was about these different men who did all sort of things, like working in steel mills and all sorts of things like that.

HOWELL: Oh, really?

HECK: And then we finally wound up with a main



HECK: Yeah, well, I use different types of pen-